UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/50/301
21 July 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Fiftieth session
Item 20 (b) of the provisional agenda*

# STRENGTHENING OF THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS, INCLUDING SPECIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE: SPECIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES OR REGIONS

## Assistance to Yemen

## Report of the Secretary-General

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its forty-eighth session, the General Assembly, by its resolution 48/195, requested the Secretary-General to keep under review the implementation of all relevant previous resolutions on assistance to Yemen and to submit to it at its fiftieth session a comprehensive report on the implementation of those resolutions. In its resolution 47/179, the Assembly took note of the challenges facing Yemen as a result of unification, the return of Yemeni expatriates, the flow of refugees and recent natural disasters and called on the international community, Member States and all United Nations organizations, including the specialized agencies, to assist in addressing the emergency situation, to help Yemen in mobilizing its own resources and to provide assistance to the Government in its reconstruction and development efforts.

## II. MOBILIZATION OF INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE

### A. Emergency recovery programme

2. Following the conflict between Iraq and Kuwait and to deal with the returnee needs ranging from infrastructure to employment creation, the World Bank and the Government, together with the United Nations Development Programme

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(UNDP) and other United Nations system agencies, developed a multisectoral emergency recovery programme in the amount of US$ 245 million. The programme was designed to cover the country's needs in a wide range of sectors including road construction, education, agriculture and housing.

3. To date, the World Bank has mobilized $60 million in credits and grants for an emergency recovery project, including $33 million from the World Bank/ International Development Association (IDA), $15 million from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and $4.5 million from Germany. UNDP provided $400,000 to Yemen from the Special Programme Resources in support of countries affected by the crisis in order to assist the Government's management unit, which is coordinating the project.

4. Activities targeted to programme objectives by the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Netherlands and others bring total funds available for this programme to $86 million. This leaves a funding gap of $159 million to implement the programme fully. In the meantime, 60 per cent of World Bank/IDA funds and 25 and 95 per cent respectively of USAID and German funds have been disbursed to date.

## B. Response of United Nations system

### 1. United Nations Children's Fund

5. UNICEF responded to the country's emergency needs in the areas of returnees, cholera control and Somali refugees. In December 1990, the Executive Director of UNICEF approved the release of US$ 160,000 from the Emergency Reserve Fund in response to the Government's appeal for emergency relief assistance. These funds were used to procure and air freight 14 tons of emergency health and drug kits to Yemen in support relief operations in the Tihama region. A subsequent release of US$ 100,000 from the same Fund was approved in January 1991 to procure vaccines and support field operations.

6. At the request of the Government, UNICEF air-freighted a consignment of medical supplies worth $22,000 into the country to assist in cholera case management.

7. During the emergency phase of the influx of refugees from Somalia, UNICEF provided milk and food to the children camped on the beach through Médecins sans frontières (MSF) and the Red Crescent. Support was also provided to immunize the younger children against measles and to establish an oral rehydration therapy (ORT) unit.

### 2. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

8. In order to respond to the emergency recovery programme, FAO's programme in Yemen has been reoriented to assist the country in tackling three main issues: conservation and management of land and water resources, including forestry and range management, and livestock development; establishment of adequate

production systems for food crops and fodder crops, including marketing, storage and credit; and development of a participatory approach in order to improve primary support services for the smallholder producers by improving effective linkages between research and extension.

9. Within this framework, FAO has conducted, from its Technical Cooperation Resources, an agricultural sector review, with wide participation of the Government, universities, private communities and donors. The study identified constraints and recommended solutions.

10. In addition, within the Netherlands Trust Fund modality, FAO initiated the implementation of an environmental resources assessment for rural land-use planning, based on a participatory approach, which will assure allocation of land resources according to communities' requirements. With a Swiss trust fund, FAO is strengthening the forestry and range management authorities in the management and conservation of natural vegetation resources and implementing a rural family planning project through the agriculture research and extension system. FAO also participated in the initial formulation of the UNDP-coordinated pilot resettlement project for returnees in Tihama.

11. FAO will formulate an integrated rural development project in Abyan governorate, financed by UNDP. It is also expected that FAO will provide technical assistance to the livestock sector targeted to the family sector producers. It will lead to improvement of family income in the rural areas and will contribute to increased job opportunities in fodder production in addition to animal production.

### 3. United Nations Development Programme

12. Apart from its contribution to the emergency recovery programme, UNDP provided emergency assistance totalling $100,000 to Yemen from the Special Programme Resources following two natural disasters. In February 1993, torrential rains and flash floods struck four southern governorates of Aden, Lahej, Abyan and Shabwa, leaving 38 dead, 5,530 houses destroyed and around 33,000 homeless. The damage caused devastation to houses, buildings, flood control and irrigation structures, crops, livestock and public infrastructure. Following an appeal made by UNDP and the Department of Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, international donors responded with assistance in the amount of $390,000 from the United States of America, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Australia and the Department of Humanitarian Affairs. The funds, all of which have been disbursed, covered medicines and medical equipment to treat and prevent large-scale outbreaks of communicable diseases and the procurement of a sewer emptier/cleaner. The direct total cost of damages caused by the February 1993 flash floods has been estimated at $312 million, of which damage to Aden international airport alone accounted for $123 million.

13. In May 1993 swarms of locusts entered Marib and Shabwa governorates, causing extensive damage to pasture, grain and fruit farms in an area estimated to be 5,580 square kilometres. UNDP provided logistical support for an aerial

spraying campaign coordinated by FAO and funded by the Government and the donor community.

14. In the area of resource mobilization, in January 1994 representatives from the Government attended a workshop on resource mobilization through effective aid coordination and management sponsored by the Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries and the Regional Bureau for Arab States of UNDP. A substantive revision to improve resource mobilization is anticipated to the ongoing UNDP national execution project for capacity-building in the Ministry of Planning and Development.

15. The first country programme for the United Republic of Yemen with an original total indicative planning figure of US$ 42.6 million over the five-year period 1992-1996 responds to the General Assembly and Economic and Social Council resolutions on assistance to Yemen dating from December 1990. The country programme's four areas of concentration focus on strategic planning, management development, human development and natural resources management. Seed money has been provided to support strategic planning for the private sector, health development and women in development. The Government has requested UNDP's cooperation to prepare a country strategy note.

16. Although significant sectoral and subsectoral studies have been carried out at the country level on vocational training, environment, water and privatization, which resulted in a number of concrete programme and project ideas, approvals and budget build-up has been much slower than anticipated owing to internal political conflict. Nevertheless, as of end January 1994, the total level of pipeline projects reached US$ 11.1 million. A major pipeline project ready for approval is a $4-million water resources management project, with $2 million pledged cost-sharing by the Netherlands. The mid-term review of the country programme will discuss the four substantive areas of water, women in development, environment and the public sector.

17. Provision of assistance to returnees, with a UNDP input of $1.5 million, is still under discussion with the Government. Returnees are in need of food, shelter, health services, education and other services and employment. UNDP/FAO/United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) (UNCHS) are ready to finalize an integrated rural development project for the resettlement of returnees in Tihama once the land has been allocated. The proposed project will settle some 5,000 returnees on Government-selected land for their sustainable employment in agriculture and animal husbandry. It will also benefit the resident community by providing improved land use and productivity and more employment opportunities.

## 4. World Food Programme

18. In response to an appeal from the Government to address the emergency in Aden caused by flash floods in February 1993, WFP approved assistance for 3,000 flood victims for a period of 6 months at a total estimated cost of US$ 118,000.

19. Ethiopian and Somali refugees have been provided with food assistance amounting to US$ 1.7 million to feed an estimated 31,000 refugees since February 1992. Currently, WFP continues to assist 13,000 refugees.

20. WFP's reconstruction and development efforts in Yemen consist of the development of rural community infrastructure at an estimated cost of US$ 13.5 million, and assistance for soil and water conservation at an estimated cost of US$ 6.5 million.

21. In the health and education sector, WFP is assisting the country through three projects by providing assistance for primary education at an estimated cost of US$ 21.6 million, assistance to maternal and child health care centres at an estimated cost of US$ 9.5 million and assistance to health-care units, hospitals and social centres. Under the latter project, WFP has so far provided food assistance amounting to US$ 23.5 million. The project is being reformulated and the estimated cost is not yet available.

### 5. United Nations Population Fund

22. Implementation of the UNFPA country programme for 1992 to 1996 made much progress during 1993. Major developments have focused on the operationalization of the national population policy. Seven sectoral workshops were organized in 1993 to review the implementation and impact of the national population policy and to develop effective mechanisms to integrate population variables into national development planning.

23. In the light of the Government's objectives and priorities in the health sector, UNFPA has approved and operationalized a major project amounting to US$ 3 million to assist the Government in improving the access and the quality of care for maternal and child health services, including family planning.

24. UNFPA is also providing assistance in the area of population, information, education and communication. This is being carried out through different sectoral information, education and communication projects throughout the country, with emphasis on developing a multimedia approach to encourage the use of reproductive health services and other family health-related issues, including breast-feeding and also the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, including AIDS.

25. UNFPA continues to emphasize the necessity of highlighting gender issues during the population census and other surveys in order to obtain a realistic picture of the socio-cultural and economic status of women, particularly their economic activities. In this connection, an important activity organized in collaboration with the University of Sana'a was the national workshop on legislation related to the status of women in Yemen, held in November 1993.

26. UNFPA is also working with non-governmental organizations that are active in community-based programmes to assist local families in the provision of health education services.

## 6. World Health Organization

27. WHO response to the Government's call for emergency assistance has been in a number of key areas to provide preventive as well as curative health care. Since 1990, diarrhoeal diseases have become a top priority in Yemen because of the large number of cases and deaths witnessed in the last three years. WHO has provided financial and technical assistance amounting to US$ 550,000 to the Ministry of Public Health and related ministries to control diarrhoeal diseases. WHO input for the control of other communicable diseases, including malaria, schistosomiasis, leprosy, onchocerciasis, and upper respiratory tract infections, amounted to US$ 1.5 million.

28. In the area of health manpower development to improve the standard of performance of health staff, WHO has provided $800,000 since 1990. Health promotion and disease prevention include a broad spectrum of activities covering health education and information, vaccination, maternal and child health care, and nutrition amounting to $1.2 million. Health management is a particularly weak area in Yemen. To address this, WHO has provided technical and financial assistance to improve the managerial process for national health development in an amount of US$ 700,000 over the period under review.

29. Under its regular budget, WHO has provided US$ 60,000 to the Government of Yemen for the supply of essential drugs and vaccines, as well as an amount of US$ 1 million annually from its Voluntary Fund.

30. Responding to the specific needs of Yemen, support and intensified collaboration between the Government and WHO for infrastructure in human resource development, district health systems based in primary health care and information systems and health financing are funded through extrabudgetary funds amounting to approximately US$ 500,000 per year.

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